

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

The following listing of claims replaces all prior listings, and all prior versions, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a xylylenediamine by hydrogenating a dicyanobenzene in a liquid phase in the presence of a nickel and/or cobalt-containing catalyst, the process comprising a step of bringing the catalyst having its activity decreased during the course of the hydrogenation of dicyanobenzene into contact with a hydrogen-containing gas at 200 to 500°C while ~~controlling a temperature~~ maintaining the rise in speed of the catalyst temperature to 40°C/min or less, thereby regenerating the catalyst; and a step of reusing the catalyst thus regenerated in the subsequent hydrogenation of the dicyanobenzene.

2. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 1, wherein a feed rate of hydrogen is regulated so as to ~~control a~~ maintain the rise in catalyst temperature ~~rise speed of the catalyst to~~ at 40°C/min or less during ~~under~~ contact with the hydrogen-containing gas.

3. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 1, wherein the step for regenerating the catalyst comprises the following treatments (1) and (2):

(1) bringing the catalyst into contact with a hydrogen-containing gas at 140 to 200°C for one hour or longer while ~~controlling~~ maintaining an average ~~treating~~ temperature ~~to of~~ 180°C or lower ~~less~~, and then

(2) further bringing the catalyst thus treated into contact with a hydrogen-containing gas at 200 to 500°C.

4. (Original) The process according to Claim 1, wherein the hydrogenation of dicyanobenzene is conducted in a fixed bed reactor.

5. (Cancelled).

6. (Original) The process according to Claim 1, wherein the catalyst is a nickel-containing catalyst.

7. (Currently Amended) A process for producing a xylylenediamine by hydrogenating a dicyanobenzene in a liquid phase in the presence of a nickel and/or cobalt-containing catalyst, the process comprising a step of regenerating the catalyst having its activity decreased during the course of the hydrogenation of the dicyanobenzene by the following treatments (1) and (2):

(1) bringing the catalyst into contact with a hydrogen-containing gas at 140 to 200°C for one hour or longer while ~~controlling~~ maintaining an average ~~treating~~ temperature ~~to of~~ 180°C or ~~lower~~ less, and then

(2) further bringing the catalyst thus treated into contact with a hydrogen-containing gas at 200 to 500°C; and

a step of reusing the catalyst thus regenerated in the subsequent hydrogenation of the dicyanobenzene.

8. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 7, wherein the step (1) is performed while ~~controlling a temperature~~ maintaining the rise speed of in temperature of the catalyst to 40°C/min or less.

9. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 8, wherein the step (1) is performed while regulating a feed rate of the hydrogen-containing gas so as to ~~control the temperature~~ maintain the rise speed of the in catalyst temperature to 40°C/min or less.

10. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 9, wherein the step (1) is performed ~~by~~ while feeding the hydrogen-containing gas at a rate of 0.001 to 1000 L/h (based on gas flow at standard conditions) ~~on a basis of a normal state of 0°C and 1 atm per 1 kg of the catalyst.~~

11. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 7, wherein the steps (1) and (2) are performed while ~~controlling a temperature~~ maintaining the rise speed of the in catalyst temperature to 40°C/min or less.

12. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 11, wherein the steps (1) and (2) are performed while regulating a feed rate of the hydrogen-containing gas so as to ~~control the temperature~~ maintain the rise speed of the in catalyst temperature to 40°C/min or less.

13. (Currently Amended) The process according to Claim 12, wherein the steps (1) and (2) are performed by feeding the hydrogen-containing gas at a rate of 0.001 to 1000 L/h (based on gas flow at standard conditions) ~~on a basis of a normal state of 0°C and 1 atm~~ per 1 kg of the catalyst.

14. (Original) The process according to Claim 7, wherein the hydrogenation of dicyanobenzene is conducted in a fixed bed reactor.

15. (Cancelled).

16. (Original) The process according to Claim 7, wherein the catalyst is a nickel-containing catalyst.